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THE SAVAGE SPAWN

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INTENSE ACTION from Todd McFarlane

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SPAWN

ALL GENERATIONS OF HEROES!

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THE SAVAGE SPAWN

INTENSE ACTION from Todd McFarlane

DEDICATED TO
WANDA
KOLOMYJEC

ANTERIORMENTE EN *SPAWN*

Una nueva alma ha tomado el cargo de Hellspawn. Tras la muerte de Al Simmons, Jim Downing, paciente en coma, despertó en un mundo y a una vida que no reconocía, poseído de un poder más allá de su comprensión.

Ayudado por Sara, una enfermera apasionada y profundamente espiritual cuya fe se quebrantó tras su conexión, Marc, un periodista joven y ambicioso, convertido en manager con un ojo para el detalle y el objetivo de hacer mundial la "historia" de Jim, y Clown, la némesis demoníaca de Al Simmons que ahora sirve como mentor y aliado, Jim debe descubrir su pasado para liberar todo su potencial.

La mezcla exclusiva de un nacido en el Infierno con los poderes celestiales bajo las órdenes de Jim lo han hecho el objetivo de antiguos y nuevos enemigos, culminando en una épica confrontación con Malebolgia, el antiguo Señor del 8º círculo del Infierno. Las secuelas de esta batalla nivelaron los laberínticos callejones conocidos como "Rat City" (Cuidad de Ratas) y trajeron nuevas revelaciones. Las ramificaciones de estos eventos, y las verdades reveladas, están lejos de alcanzar y aclarar la búsqueda de Jim para descubrir su pasado. Una búsqueda que empieza... ahora...

Jim Downing – Un hombre cuyo pasado está envuelto en misterio, y conectado íntimamente a la maraña del mito de Spawn. Jim es el nuevo Hellspawn... y mucho más. Habiendo pasado años en un coma profundo, el objetivo principal de Jim es engarzar los fragmentos del hombre que fue, en un esfuerzo por descubrir realmente quién era.

El programa – Una operación militar clandestina con raíces fuertemente ligadas a los últimos 20 años de existencia de Spawn. Escondida bajo el nombre de El programa, y también conocida como El proyecto: Ragnarok, oculta la verdad que busca Jim, y el oscuro corazón de un pasado que es mejor mantener enterrado.

Sara Johnston – Cuando Jim despertó del coma (publicación #185), Sara fue la primera persona en recibirlo al otro lado de la oscuridad. Una mujer con una fe fuerte. La conexión entre Sara y Jim la pondrá a prueba en caminos que jamás hubiera imaginado.

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RECUERDO DOLOR. Y DESPUÉS... LA LUZ.

OJALA HUBIERA SABIDO... ¿POR QUÉ?

¿POR QUÉ ES TAN JODIDAMENTE DIFÍCIL RECORDAR LAS COSAS?

EN VEZ DE ESO, LO QUE TENGO ES A TODO EL MUNDO LANZANDO ESTUPIDECES SOBRE MI PASADO. Y NI SIQUIERA ALGUNO ESTUVO CERCA CUANDO ME PASÓ... ¡LO QUE PASÓ!

LO OBVIO ES QUE HE "CAMBIADO"... PERO ¿CÓMO? ¿Y POR QUÉ? ES SÓLO UN PUÑADO DE IMÁGENES. NO PUEDO UNIRLAS. Y CADA VEZ QUE CIERRO LOS OJOS, LO ÚNICO QUE SIENTO ES PENA.

COMO ALGUIEN ABRIÉNDOSE UN AGUJERO EN MEDIO DE MÍ. UN AGUJERO TAN GRANDE QUE TODO PODRÍA SALIR DE MÍ.

ENTONCES PARA. Y TODO LO QUE SIENTO ES LA PRESENCIA FRÍA Y PESADA DE LA OSCURIDAD.

TODAS LAS NOCHES ERAN IGUAL. DOLOR. LUZ. FRÍO. OSCURIDAD. UNA Y OTRA VEZ, HASTA QUE, POR FIN, DESPERTÉ DEL COMA.

QUIZÁ SEA POR ESO POR LO QUE APENAS DUERMO POR LA NOCHE. QUIZÁ SE SUPONÍA QUE NO DEBERÍA PERMANECER DESPIERTO. QUIZÁ SE SUPONÍA QUE DEBERÍA PERMANECER EN LO NEGRO.

COMO LOS OTROS.

ME PREGUNTO SI ELLOS TAMBIÉN PASARON POR AQUÍ. INTENTANDO DESCUBRIR QUIÉNES ERAN EN REALIDAD.

¿O SE VOLVIERON LOCOS? COMO YO ESTOY, ESPERANDO ENCAJAR LAS PIEZAS, SIN NADA EXCEPTO UNOS CUANTOS FRAGMENTOS DEL PASADO.

EMPEZAMOS EL RESUMEN DE HOY
CON LA MISMA PREGUNTA SIN RESPUESTA QUE NOS LLEVAMOS
HACIENDO DESDE QUE ESTE SINGULAR INDIVIDUO APARECIÓ EN
LA CONCIENCIA PÚBLICA... ¿QUIÉN ES JIM DOWNING?

EN LAS ÚLTIMAS SEMANAS,
PRÁCTICAMENTE CADA FUENTE DE NOTICIAS HA INTENTADO
DAR INFORMACIÓN DE SU PASADO. NUESTRA PROPIA ORGANIZACIÓN
HA TENIDO UN EQUIPO DE PERIODISTAS INTENTANDO RASTREAR CADA
DETALLE, CADA PISTA DEL PASADO DEL SR. DOWNING. A DÍA DE HOY,
NADIE HA PODIDO ENCONTRAR NADA. POR ESO ES POR LO QUE
USTEDES LEEN Y ESCUCHAN CADA VEZ MÁS Y MÁS SOBRE ÉL.

DESDE SUS MILAGROSAS ACCIONES
HASTA SU APARENTEMENTE IMPOSIBLE SUPERVIVENCIA
A UN INTENTO DE ASESINATO, CUALQUIERA DIRÍA QUE UNA
PERSONA CON ESOS INCREÍBLES PODERES TENDRÍA TRAS DE
SÍ UNA CADENA DE PERSONAS CON DATOS DE SU PASADO.
SORPRENDENTEMENTE, NI PERSONAS NI DOCUMENTOS
PUEDEN DAR ALGUNA INDICACIÓN DE ESTE "SALVADOR"
QUE PARECE HABER APARECIDO DE LA NADA.

EN ESTOS DÍAS, CON TODA LA TECNOLOGÍA
DE LA INFORMACIÓN APARECIENDO CADA MINUTO,
¿CÓMO ES POSIBLE QUE LA BÚSQUEDA DE LA IDENTIDAD DE
UN HOMBRE ESTÉ TAN COMPLETAMENTE VACÍA DE ALGUNA PISTA?
PARECE IMPROBABLE. Y TODAVÍA SEGUIMOS ENFRENTÁNDONOS AL
SR. DOWNING. MIENTRAS MILLONES DE PERSONAS EN TODO EL GLOBO
CONTINÚAN INSISTIENDO EN QUE NO ES OTRO QUE EL PROPIO JESÚS...
OTROS, QUE BUSCAN RESPUESTAS MÁS PRÁCTICAS, QUIZÁ DEBAN
UNIRSE A LOS FANÁTICOS BLOGGERS CONCLUYENDO QUE SI NO HAY
AGENCIA, INSTITUCIÓN GUBERNAMENTAL O CIUDADANO QUE PUEDAN
DECIRNOS DE DÓNDE VIENE, ENTONCES LA ÚNICA CONCLUSIÓN
POSIBLE ES QUE SIMPLEMENTE HA APARECIDO DE LOS CIELOS.

Y LA IDEA DE QUE EL ÚNICO HIJO DE DIOS
ESTÉ REALMENTE ANDANDO ENTRE NOSOTROS ES UN DESCUBRIMIENTO
TAN ASOMBROSO QUE LA MAYORÍA DE NOSOTROS NO COMPRENDERÁ
LO QUE ESO SIGNIFICA PARA AMÉRICA Y EL RESTO DEL MUNDO.

¿POR QUÉ NO? ¿POR QUÉ, DESPUÉS DE TANTO TIEMPO,
DESPUÉS DE TANTAS ORACIONES Y SÚPLICAS A DIOS PARA QUE
MOSTRARA CUALQUIER SIGNO DE SU EXISTENCIA, NO PODRÍA SER ESTE
HOMBRE LA RESPUESTA A ESAS PREGUNTAS? ¿DEBERÍAMOS HACER
UN ACTO DE FE Y ACEPTARLO, O DEBERÍAMOS ESTAR ALERTA FRENTE
A ALGUIEN CON ESAS HABILIDADES QUE NO SABE NI QUIÉN ES?

ENTONCES ME ESTÁN DICIENDO QUE HOY DÍA,
CON TODAS ESAS MARAVILLAS MODERNAS DE LA TECNOLOGÍA
EN NUESTRAS MANOS... SMARTPHONES, SOFTWARE DE
RECONOCIMIENTO FACIAL, NOTICIAS LAS 24 HORAS...
EL CASI INTERMINABLE ALCANCE DE LA RED MUNDIAL...
¡¡¿¿QUE NADIE **TIENE** NI UNA IDEA DE **QUIÉN ES ESE HOMBRE**??!!

¡NO ME LO CREO!

SE ESTÁN AUTOCONVENCIENDO DE QUE JIM DOWNING
ES LA SEGUNDA VENIDA DE JESUCRISTO... BIEN, ¡ADELANTE!
¡ES UN PAÍS LIBRE! PERO GUÁRDATE TUS OPINIONES PARA TÍ,
PORQUE YO ME NIEGO A CREER QUE ESA PERSONA EN LA QUE
ME ENSEÑARON A CREER ES AHORA **UN CULITO SURFERO**
DE PELO RUBIO.

LA BIBLIA QUE YO LEÍ NO DECÍA NADA DE
QUE JESÚS VOLVERÍA A LA TIERRA Y EMPEZARÍA A USAR
SUS PODERES CUANDO LE DIERA LA GANA. O PEOR AÚN...
¡QUE SE SENTIRÍA AVERGONZADO DE SABER QUE LOS TENÍA!
¡NO! ¡LO QUE JESÚS DEBERÍA HACER ES BAJAR A LA TIERRA
Y MOSTRAR A CADA PERSONA DEL PLANETA QUE SÓLO HAY
UN DIOS Y UNA RELIGIÓN, ¡Y QUE SE UNIRÍA A NOSOTROS!
NO SE ESCONDERÍA Y ACOBARDARÍA CUANDO
ALGUIEN QUISIERA UNA FOTO SUYA.

ESE NO ES EL MESÍAS... ¡ES UN **FRAUDE!** Y PUEDEN
DECIRLE QUE LO DIGO YO.

ESTO, SEÑORAS Y CABALLEROS, NO ES MÁS
QUE OTRA CONSPIRACIÓN COCINADA POR EL GOBIERNO
SOCIALISTA CON LA ESPERANZA DE QUE NOS VOLVAMOS SUMISOS,
SIN PENSAMIENTO CRÍTICO. YA HE VISTO ESTO ANTES...
PERO NO A ESTOS NIVELES TAN ABSURDOS ...
Y ESTO, ¡**NO** LES VA A FUNCIONAR!

PERO EL DOLOR... NO ESTÁ IMPIDIENDO QUE TODO SALGA AHORA. EMPIEZO A "VER" MÁS DE MI PASADO. MÁS DESTELLOS.

Y CON ALGUNOS DE ELLOS... YO... YO SIENTO QUE SON VERDAD.

QUE DE ALGUNA FORMA, MI AMBICIÓN ME DIO PODER SOBRE OTROS. Y EN MI BÚSQUEDA POR UN DESCUBRIMIENTO GLORIOSO, ALGÚN LOGRO CIENTÍFICO... FORMÉ EQUIPO CON HOMBRES CUYA ASTUCIA DESPIADADA ERA SU MEJOR ATRIBUTO.

MANIPULAMOS PERSONAS. EXPERIMENTAMOS EN SUS CUERPOS. LOS DEFORMAMOS POR LA CIENCIA.

¿POR QUÉ? ¿PORQUE YO NECESITABA SENTIR MÁS GLORIA? ¿PORQUE NECESITABA MÁS DINERO?

¡NO! ¡ERA PERFECCIÓN! ESO ES LO QUE BUSCABA.

Y SUFRIERON. ¡DIOS, CÓMO SUFRIERON!

¡PERO TODOS FALLARON!

Y SAQUÉ ESE DESEO DE OTROS HUMANOS, CONVIRTIÉNDOME EN UN CREADOR DE "MONSTRUOS", JUNTÁNDOLOS UNO TRAS OTRO.

CADA UNO DE ELLOS.

LO VEO TODO AHORA MUY CLARO... COMO SE VOLVIERON TODOS CONTRA MÍ Y NO PUDE CONFIAR EN ELLOS. ¡UNA Y OTRA VEZ!

PROJECT RAGNOROK

CANCELLED

ASÍ QUE LO ROBÉ. TODOS LOS SECRETOS QUE HABÍAN ESTADO ESCONDIÉNDOME.

INCLUSO DE ESOS QUE DECÍAN QUE "ME QUERÍAN".

¿POR QUÉ? PORQUE ESTABAN CELOSOS. SABÍAN QUE NUNCA SERÍAN PERFECTOS. ¡NO COMO YO!

¡PERO TODO ERA UNA MIERDA! DECÍAN QUE NO FUNCIONARÍA. QUE ERA DEMASIADO PELIGROSO. QUE ME VOLVERÍA LOCO... ¡ILUSORIO.

¡NO COMO YO!

Y ASÍ EMPEZÓ TODO...

DOLOR.

LUZ.

FRÍO.

OSCURIDAD.

ES TODO LO QUE PUEDO RECORDAR AHORA.

ESO, Y LA CARA DE UN EXTRAÑO.

NADA MÁS

NADA EXCEPTO UN NEGRO ABSOLUTO. DIOS SABE CUÁNTO TIEMPO ESTUVE ASÍ. ¿UN AÑO? ¿DOS? QUIZÁ DIEZ. NADIE LO SABE

PARO AHORA ESTOY DESPIERTO, HE RENACIDO Y DE ALGUNA FORMA, DOTADO CON PODERES TAN FUERTES QUE PUEDEN RESUCITAR A LOS MUERTOS

EN LUGAR DE TEMERME, EL MUNDO QUIERE LLAMARME "MESÍAS"? QUIEREN CONVERTIRME EN SU NUEVA CELEBRIDAD MUNDIAL SIN NI SIQUIERA PREGUNTARME QUE QUIERO YO. LA MITAD DE LA GENTE QUE CONOZCO TODAVÍA PIENSA QUE SÓLO SOY UN SIMPLE CURANDERO

UN MISTERIO QUE TODAVÍA NO HAN SIDO CAPACES DE RESOLVER

NO SABEN NADA DE TODO LO DEMÁS... Y SI LO DESCUBREN NO SABRÍAN QUE HACER DE TODAS FORMAS

DEMONIOS, ÁNGELES... SPAWNS, TODOS ELLOS AQUÍ FRENTE A SUS NARICES. Y LO MÁS ESCALOFRIANTE ES QUE NO SON CONSCIENTES DE ELLO

0:0:0:5

SUPONGO QUE YO TAMBIÉN

ANTES DE MI COMA, DEBIAN DE ESTAR POR AQUÍ YO DEBÍA DE ESTAR TAN CIEGO E IGNORANTE COMO CUALQUIER OTRO

PERO AHORA NO

AHORA ESTOY MUY DESPIERTO Y LOS HE VISTO A TODO LO QUE QUIEREN HACER ES DESTRUIRNOS PARA PODER VENCER AL OTRO LADO. CIELO INFIERNO, NADIE DA UNA MIERDA POR LA TIERRA SI ESO SIGNIFICA QUE PUEDEN GANAR ESA GUERRA

SOMOS SOLO UNA PIEDRA EN EL CAMINO, SIN IMPORTANCIA PERO COMETIERON UN ERROR

UN ENORME ERROR!

DÁNDOME EL PODER!

SU MALDITO SPAWN

ENTONCES, ¿QUÉ VAS A HACER CON ESTO?

NO SÉ. SUPONGO QUE LO QUE TODO EL MUNDO... EDIFICIO ABANDONADO DE REPENTE COLAPSA EN UNA ZONA DECADENTE DE LA CIUDAD. AFORTUNADAMENTE, NO HAY HERIDOS.

SÍ... SUPONGO QUE TIENES RAZÓN. YO LE ESTOY DANDO DEMASIADAS VUELTAS.

ES QUE ESE EDIFICIO ESTÁ JUSTO EN LA ENTRADA A LOS CALLEJONES DONDE SE HAN VISTO MUCHAS COSAS RARAS. ADEMÁS, OTRA LUZ "EXTRAÑA" APARECIÓ MÁS O MENOS A LA MISMA HORA EN LA QUE TUVIMOS NUESTRO PRIMER TERREMOTO DESPUÉS DE DOCE AÑOS*. PERO... SUPONGO QUE OTROS TIENEN LA RAZÓN. ES SÓLO UNA MALA INGENIERÍA ESTRUCTURAL EN UN EDIFICIO CON MÁS DE CINCUENTA AÑOS.

APARTE DE ESO, ¿QUÉ HACES AQUÍ? PENSABA QUE TENÍAS MUCHO TRABAJO EN LA OFICINA.

*Último número. Todd.

ESO ES LO QUE HE VENIDO A DECIRTE. LO DEJO. ME MANDAN A VIRGINIA. POR FIN ME DEJAN VOLVER A CASA.

¿CÓMO TE SIENTES?

DESGARRADO. ODIO DEJARTE EN MEDIO DE TODO ESTO CON DOWNING, PERO CREO QUE PUEDO INDAGAR ALGO MÁS DESDE LANGLEY, YA QUE MI VÍCTIMA SIGUE MANTENIENDO ALGUNA CONEXIÓN CON ALGUIEN DE AQUÍ, EN NEW YORK.

Y ESO SIN MENCIONAR LA JODIDA MIERDA DEL TEMA DE LAS HUELLAS DIGITALES DE DOWNING.

Argentina.

CAPITÁN, CREO QUE HEMOS ENCONTRADO LO QUE BUSCABA-MOS.

¿QUÉ PONE EN LA CAJA?

SÓLO TIENE ESCRITO "EL PROYECTO".

¿Y LOS ARCHIVOS DE DENTRO?

DICEN LO MISMO... AUNQUE LA MITAD DE ELLOS ESTÁN VACÍOS. ¿QUÉ HACEMOS AHORA?

QUEMENLO TODO. COMO SE NOS ORDENÓ. NO DEJEN NADA ATRÁS.

SOLTAD LAS CAJAS Y ALEJAOS.

¡AHORA!

Jesús.

¡¡FUEGO!!

BRAKKA

BRAKKA

BRAKKA

BRAKKA

MALA IDEA

NECESITO ALGO DE TI, SOLDADO...

QUIERO SABER POR QUÉ ESTÁIS QUEMANDO ESTOS ARCHIVOS.

¡QUE TE JODAN!

¿IMAGINABA QUE DIRÍA ESO... Y ASÍ LO HIZO MI TRAJE!

Y PARECE QUE NO LE GUSTA LA RESPUESTA MÁS QUE A MÍ.

PUEDO SENTIR SU IRA... INCLUSO PEOR QUE LA MÍA

SE LLEVA TODO LO QUE YO INTENTO DEJAR ATRÁS. DE OTRA FORMA, HABRÍA DEJADO A ESTE TIPO APARTE.

AHORA, SU ANSIA DE SANGRE ESTÁ EMPEZANDO A FILTRARSE EN MÍ. PERO NECESITO RESPUESTAS, ANTES DE DEJAR QUE EL TRAJE ACABE CON TODO

PORQUE ESTOY A PUNTO DE VOLVER A LA OSCURIDAD... OTRA VEZ.

NECESITO SACAR ALGO DE ESTE DOLOR

¿CÓMO SARA

NO TODO LO DEMÁS

¿SOLO SARÁ

ELLA ES LA ÚNICA QUE ESTÁ AHÍ POR MÍ, CON QUIEN PUEDO CONTAR. TODOS LOS OTROS TIENEN SUS PROPIOS ASUNTOS. ENTONCES, ¿POR QUÉ SIGO HACIÉNDOLE DAÑO? TODO LO QUE QUIERE ES QUE DESCUBRA MI PASADO Y SEA FELIZ.

PARA DISFRUTAR LA VIDA Y DEJAR DE PREOCUPARME. ¿POR QUÉ NO PUEDO HACERLO? ¿POR QUÉ NO PUEDO MANTENER AL DEMONIO DENTRO DE MÍ, E IMPEDIR QUE ELLA LO SIENTA? NO DEBERÍA HABERLA LLEVADO NUNCA A LAS SOMBRAS.

¿EN QUÉ ESTABA PENSANDO?

MIS PESADILLAS!

TENEMOS NUEVA INFORMACIÓN SOBRE EL SUCESO EN EL QUE UN EDIFICIO DE NUEVA YORK SE COLAPSÓ HOY EN LA MADRUGADA. RUMORES INICIALES SOBRE UN ATAQUE TERRORISTA EN LA CIUDAD CAUSARON EL PÁNICO Y ALGUNOS CASOS AISLADOS DE ALBOROTO. LA POLICÍA FUE RÁPIDA EN RESPONDER, Y YA HAN DETENIDO A UN PUÑADO DE SOSPECHOSOS.

SE HA DETERMINADO RÁPIDAMENTE EL HECHO DE QUE EL LUGAR... UN POBRE VECINDARIO DE ALMACENES Y VIVIENDAS ABANDONADAS, CONOCIDO LOCALMENTE COMO "RAT CITY"... CAYÓ POR EL COLAPSO DE UNA VIEJA Y OLVIDADA TUBERÍA DE GAS. ORIGINALMENTE, SE PENSÓ QUE EL TERREMOTO OCURRIDO PUDO HABER JUGADO ALGÚN PAPEL EN ESTO, PERO LA INFORMACIÓN APUNTA AHORA FUERTEMENTE A LA TUBERÍA QUE SE DESMORONÓ.

IREMOS INFORMANDO CONFORME TENGAMOS MÁS DATOS.

TAMBIÉN EN NUEVA YORK, JIM DOWNING, EL MISTERIOSO "CURANDERO", HA PEDIDO OTRA RUEDA DE PRENSA. SE ESPECULA QUE HARÁ OFICIAL EL NOMBRE Y LA INTENCIÓN DE LA FUNDACIÓN QUE PREVIAMENTE DIJO QUE MONTARÍA.

EL MILAGROSO TRABAJADOR JIM DOWNING SUBIRÁ DE NUEVO AL ESCENARIO ESTA TARDE, EN OTRA RUEDA DE PRENSA. INTENCIONADAMENTE O NO, SE ESTÁ MANTENIENDO AL MARGEN POR EL TIEMPO SUFICIENTE COMO PARA QUE EL RUMOR DE SU POSIBLE DIVINIDAD VAYA MURIENDO.

MIENTRAS TANTO...

NADIE NIEGA SU ATRACTIVO PARA LA IMAGINACIÓN DE LOS CIUDADANOS. TRAS SANAR A UNO DE LOS PAPARAZZI, SIGUIÓ EL VIEJO CONSEJO Y SE SANÓ A SÍ MISMO. ESTE HOMBRE SIGUE MANTENIENDO NUESTRA ATENCIÓN, Y ES TAN BUEN JUGADOR QUE ESTÁ EMPEZANDO A MEDIR SUS PASOS. LA ATENCIÓN DE LAS REDES QUE SE LE HA CONCEDIDO EN LA ACTUACIÓN DE ESTA TARDE NOS DICE QUE NO VA A IRSE A LA DERIVA.

CONTINUANDO CON SU ANUNCIO DE LA SEMANA ANTERIOR, SU CASI INSINUACIÓN DE CREAR UNA FUNDACIÓN CARITATIVA, ES RAZONABLE ESPECULAR SOBRE LO QUE DOWNING INTENTA AHORA PONER SOBRE LA MESA. PERO, ¿CÓMO DE ESPECÍFICO PODRÁ SER? SU TRABAJO IMPLICA HACERLO CON MILAGROS... Y LOS MILAGROS SON DIFÍCILES DE ESPECIFICAR.

¡AQUÍ LLEGA! OTRA RUEDA DE PRENSA DE ESTE TIMADOR. HAY COSAS MUCHO MÁS IMPORTANTES EN LAS QUE CENTRARSE QUE EN UNA NUEVA LISTA DE INTERMINABLES Y ABURRIDAS RUEDAS DE PRENSA QUE JIM DOWNING ADORA REALIZAR. ¡SIN IDENTIDAD! ¡SIN PASADO! ¿CÓMO SE SUPONE QUE PODEMOS CONFIAR EN ÉL? ¿CUÁNTAS VECES NOS VAN A FORZAR A ESCUCHAR A LA GENTE QUE SE APROVECHA DEL SISTEMA? HASTA DONDE ME CONCIERNE, NO DEJA DE SER ALGO MÁS SIN BENEFICIOS BUSCANDO ESTAR EXENTO DE IMPUESTOS PARA ESENCIALMENTE ROBAR DE NUESTRO GOBIERNO.

COMO SI NO TUVIÉRAMOS YA BASTANTES AYUDAS DEL GOBIERNO SIENDO REPARTIDAS DESPUÉS DEL COLAPSO DEL EDIFICIO DE NUEVA YORK... ¡UNA RUEDA DE PRENSA MÁS ES JUSTO LO QUE LA CIUDAD NECESITA AHORA!

HOMBRE... ¿POR QUÉ ESTOY TAN NERVIOSO? ES COMO SI NO HUBIERA ESTADO HACIENDO ESTO EN LAS ÚLTIMAS SEMANAS

CÁMARAS DE TELEVISIÓN, RUEDAS DE PRENSA... DE HECHO, CREO QUE ME ENCUENTRO MUY BIEN CON ELLOS

¿ENTONCES, ¿POR QUÉ NO SE ME VAN LAS MARIPOSAS DEL ESTÓMAGO? ESTOY ACTUANDO COMO UN COLEGIAL

O QUIZÁ ES QUE SÉ QUE SI EL PLAN NO FUNCIONA NUNCA SERÉ CAPAZ DE PROTEGER A SARA NI A MARC. SIEMPRE ESTARÁN EN LA LÍNEA DE FUEGO POR MI CULPA

SU ÚNICA OPORTUNIDAD DE NO CONVERTIRSE EN OBJETIVOS... O DE NO RESULTAR HERIDOS... ES QUE YO ME ALEJE DE ELLOS

ES EL ÚNICO CAMINO.

PERO CON SARA VA A SER UNA DURA TAREA YA QUE HA VISTO LO QUE PUEDO HACER. VI EL TERROR EN SU CARA CUANDO SALIÓ DE LAS SOMBRAS CONMIGO*

¿QUÉ DEMONIOS PASABA POR MI CABEZA? POR SUPUESTO QUE DEBE ESTAR TRAUMATIZADA. ¿QUIÉN NO? ¿EN QUÉ ESTABA PENSANDO?

*Ver Spawn #204. Todd

ASÍ QUE AHORA TENGO QUE HACERLO TODO BIEN

PORQUE SI HE TRAICIONADO TANTO AL CIELO COMO AL INFIERNO... COMO MALEBOLGIA

NO PUEDO NI IMAGINAR LO QUE PONDRÁN EN MI CAMINO.

ANTES DE NADA, QUERÍA AGRADECERLES QUE HAYAN VENIDO HOY DE NUEVO. COMO MENCIONÉ EN MI PRIMERA RUEDA DE PRENSA... ESTABA EN PROCESO DE INICIAR UNA FUNDACIÓN CARITATIVA QUE AYUDARÍA A ELEVAR LA CONCIENCIA SOBRE EL SUFRIMIENTO POR LAS ENFERMEDADES Y OTROS PROBLEMAS DE SALUD.

TAMBIÉN DIJE QUE ME ENCONTRABA BAJO UNA BATERÍA DE CHEQUEOS PARA DETERMINAR SI PODRÍA UTILIZAR MIS PODERES "SANATORIOS" SOBRE CUALQUIER INDIVIDUO. LOS TEST PRELIMINARES Y VERSIONES MUCHO MÁS EXTENSAS DE DICHOS TEST SERÁN REALIZADAS ESTA SEMANA.

PERO ESO NO ES LO QUE ME HA TRAÍDO AQUÍ HOY. TENGO EL GRAN ORGULLO DE ANUNCIAR OFICIALMENTE LA APERTURA DE LA FUNDACIÓN "RESTAURAR, REESTRUCTURAR Y RESUCITAR".

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Y ANTES DE QUE HAGAN ALGUNA PREGUNTA... LA RESPUESTA ES "NO". EL NOMBRE DE LA FUNDACIÓN NO ESTÁ BASADO EN LO QUE MIS PODERES PUEDEN O NO HACER.

IMPLICA, MÁS BIEN, NUESTRO OBJETIVO DE AYUDAR NO SOLO A LA GENTE, SINO TAMBIÉN A TODAS LAS COMUNIDADES Y SUS VECINDARIOS.

COMO LA MAYORÍA DE USTEDES VERÍA EL OTRO DÍA, FUI DISPARADO POR UN ASALTANTE EN UNA CADENA DE TV. Y COMO TAMBIÉN VIERON, DE ALGUNA FORMA SOBREVIVÍ. PERO POR UN BREVE MOMENTO, MIENTRAS YACÍA EN EL SUELO, ALGO CRUZÓ MI MENTE... ¿DE QUÉ ME TENGO QUE PREOCUPAR?

¿QUÉ ES ESO QUE MÁS TEMERÍA PERDER SI MURIERA JUSTO AHORA?

MI RESPUESTA FUE SIMPLE: LA GENTE QUE ME RODEA. PERO TAMBIÉN PENSÉ QUE ESE AMBIENTE EN EL QUE ESTÁN VIVIENDO LAS HACE ESPECIALES Y FUERTES.

SIN UN ENTORNO SEGURO Y CONSTRUTIVO, NINGUNO DE ELLOS SERÍA COMO SON HOY DÍA. POR ESO, LA PRIMERA ACCIÓN DE MI NUEVA FUNDACIÓN ES ADQUIRIR EL RECIENTEMENTE DESTRUIDO BLOQUE ABANDONADO Y SUS CALLEJONES... ESA ÁREA LLAMADA "RAT CITY"... Y RECONSTRUIRLA EN UNA COMUNIDAD PRÓSPERA Y VIBRANTE.

ESTE ES EL PRIMER PASO DE NUESTRA FUNDACIÓN, IMPLEMENTANDO EL OBJETIVO DE "RESTAURAR, REESTRUCTURAR Y RESUCITAR". AHORA, SI ALGUIEN TIENE ALGUNA PREGUNTA, ESTARÍA ENCANTADO DE RESPONDERLE.

INTERESANTE MOVIMIENTO, DOWNING. PERO ESPERA A QUE OIGAS SOBRE MI RESURRECCIÓN.

SIGUIENTE: "EL PROYECTO"

WELCOME, EVERYONE

Back in June of 1992, when the first issue of *Spawn* came out, I wrote a letter in the back of the book summing up why I was walking away from both Marvel and DC Comics. At that time, I was having a pretty successful run on *Spider-Man*, which helped catapult me into the career I had then and continue to have today.

The first sentence of the letter I wrote in the back of *Spawn* #1 was, "**Why Image Comics?**" Let's now take that same question and bring it into present day, but instead ask, "**Why Image Comics 20 years later?**" Some of the reasons I decided to leave the big two (Marvel and DC) years ago, are still the reasons why I stick around and help Image continue to exist today.

The biggest reason for me now sticking around IMAGE COMICS (beyond my own personal wants and needs) is to help provide that "option" I spoke of in my letter—the option of being able to show the creative community that you don't just have to work for the two biggest comic companies. Although Marvel and DC dominated the industry market shares during my time with them, I was always grateful for the independent companies back in 1992 that showed us you could go off and go in another direction. I think I mentioned a couple companies I supported as a collector in the '80's, like First Comics and Pacific Comics, who helped foster this practice. The comparative of those companies today are Image, Dark Horse, IDW and a handful of others. These companies give you the chance to take your ideas and either have complete ownership and creative input, or at least some variation on that theme.

What any creative individual needs to do is assess if this '**option**' is a good one for them or not. For me, I had put in my time with the big two, and decided to go off and scratch the creative itch I'd been living with. I wanted to take some of the characters I'd created in high school, put them on paper, and see if any of them stuck. Obviously, the first one that came out of the gate was *Spawn*. As you sit here reading this letter, I'm proud to say we're at issue #220, so it wasn't a short-term idea or some throwaway character. Spawn was something I was deeply attached to since high school.

I also smile widely when I think of the other books to come out of Image Comics that have had, or are having, success. A book like *The Walking Dead* is an example of this, or even a creator, like Robert Kirkman, who we brought on board as a partner at Image a few years ago. These new books and creative individuals magnify the point that there is still ample opportunity for any creator out there.

The fear of the unknown has made many talented people hesitate in trying out an idea that has been brewing in their head. I've met many creative individuals with the mindset that since the world isn't the same as it was in 1992, when Image Comics first appeared, that lightning can't strike twice. I don't agree with that. I think good product paired with a fair price tag will always win out. Again, Robert Kirkman is a good example. He was willing to totally disengage himself from the big two completely, and instead put all his energy into his own ideas. I'm also seeing people who are coming up through the rank and file who were either, dismissed by or disinterested in working for the big two, but are now putting out their own books with a solid amount of success.

As I've gotten older, it becomes less important to me of having a book in the top ten, but rather just having a book, period, that you can make a living off of, and enjoy what you're creating. Luckily, dozens of other creative stalwarts have allowed Image Comics the opportunity of publishing their books.

Twenty years of creativity springing up in front of my eyes only reinforces the pride I've had in watching others succeed.

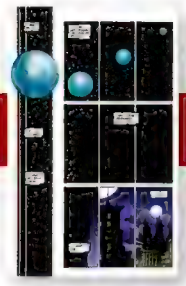
The initial foundation of Image Comics was ably put together by the original founders, and continues to this day with the current crop of partners—Marc Silvestri, Erik Larsen, Jim Valentino, Robert Kirkman and myself. Our goal was not only to create a safe haven for our own products, but also a safe haven for any ideas, books, or commentary other creators may have.

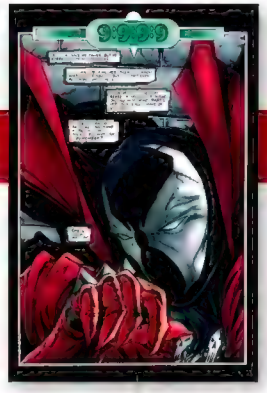
Today I still encourage others to take the same action I took 20 years ago ... because I believe each and everyone one of you should give your 'creative itch' a scratch and try developing your own book, with your own characters, at least once in your life. If it's a dismal failure, the worst that can happen is you'll have to go back to where you started, beg for the job you had previously, and continue down the same path. But for the odd person who's willing to put their foot in the door jam and endure a bit of pain, there's an opportunity for some very successful careers. In its simplest form, what I'm trying to say is, "You can't win the lotto if you don't buy a ticket." Trying to put out your characters is your own personal lottery ticket. I encourage each of you to gamble on that so that, 20 years from now, we can have this same conversation about Image and companies like ours, but with the addition of us talking about ten great titles, ten great ideas, that do not exist today. Hopefully, one of you reading at this moment will be the person who has one of those ten brilliant titles that we will all be jealous of. That's what excites me most about comics right now. I love drawing and writing them, but I get more excited about watching the next generation create comics even better than we did.

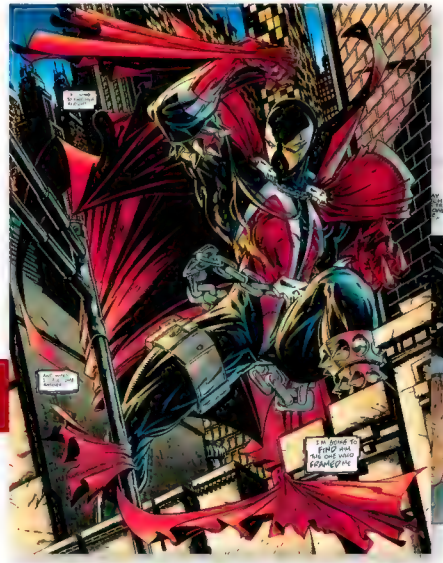
Bring us your ideas and put another smile across my face.

TODD

SPAWN #1
ART RETROSPECTIVE







Managing Editor Jen Cassidy sat down with *Spawn* creator Todd McFarlane to discuss his thoughts on the groundbreaking first issue of his iconic series, his creative process, and what's changed for the title over the past two decades.

This issue of *Spawn* (#220) intentionally mimicked the page layout of issue #1 panel for panel, but with the current *Spawn* storyline. The goal was to find a creative way to pay homage to the issue that introduced the world to the greatest Hell born antihero, and give observant fans a fun discovery moment.

Jen: First thing we're going to talk about is the "reporter page". You've said in the past that it was an interesting way to add depth and convey different story beats. The reporters have been a part of the book since issue one. Why did you introduce them, and why do you continue to use them to this day?

Todd: The reason for using the reporters is because I really wasn't a big fan of using captions in comic books, and even less a fan of having the main characters always give the reader all the information. The reporter page was a mechanism that allowed me to get information across in the book, but it was information that was from a third party that had no direct involvement in the events. So the information is as valid as any news you read in the paper or hear on TV. Anyone delivering information on big actions is just doing so as an outside observer, with a limited amount of facts.

What I was trying to show was how the news and outside information can get distorted, compared to the reality people were reading in the comic book at the time. I thought the device worked, and we've kept it around 20 years because I think it's a helpful storytelling tool.

Jen: Why did you choose to show Spawn for the first time vertically, as opposed to horizontally, in a two-page spread in issue #1? Was there significance to the pose?

Todd: It was an easy artistic decision making for me. You have a book, the character's name is Spawn, and at some point you need to introduce him to the audience. No one knew who this character was in 1992. I believed he needed to be introduced in a big, dramatic fashion. What's more dramatic than doing it in a two-page spread?

The problem with a two-page spread is that it's built for a left to right read, more for width, not height. The only way I was going to get the height to show the stature of Spawn with his cape and such was to do the two-page spread sideways. I've got to tell you, I'm not really a fan of having to turn comic books to see the art, but it was the only way I was going to get the dramatic intro for Spawn.

Jen: Now we move on to Sam and Twitch. Why did you decide to introduce these two to the comic book, and provide them with such a stellar dynamic?

Todd: All the characters I introduced to this book are there for some reason. I knew this book was going to have a heavy urban feel to it, so instead of bringing in scientists and people who had sort of fantastic jobs, I was trying to go as street level as I could.

In the first issue, murders take place, so you need investigators. I needed to get the police involved because they needed to be a part of this urban world, and I wanted to bring two police officers into the fold that could return in future issues.

A majority of the writers who have taken a crack at writing Sam and Twitch tend to get it wrong. They don't understand the two characters, and how they work with each other. If you actually go back and re-read Sam and Twitch, you'll see that Sam and Twitch only have that comical edge to them when they're alone and by themselves, for the most part, or when they're talking to themselves. People always think these guys are clowning around, but they're not. When they're on the case or at a scene and talking to people, they've got their game face on. Only after they're walking away or in their car or office will the joking sides of their personalities come up. It's a dynamic you'd have with your best friend or brother—the stuff nobody can poke fun of more than you, yourself, can. As soon as someone says something insulting to Sam, Twitch is the first guy to defend him, even if ten minutes later he gives Sam a zinger.

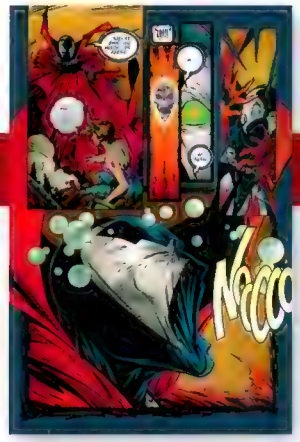
I also created them with the personalities that they have because I knew the book was going to have a heavy, dark feel to it, and I knew I was going to have to find places that gave levity to it. It's also the reason the Clown is the way he is, too. Having everything dark and morose all the time wouldn't necessarily be that fun of a read. So I had to introduce places where I could go counter to that from time-to-time.

Jen: What about the power meter? Where did that come from, and why include it in the book? It seemed like you intentionally made it a design element in the title. Why did you make the choice to do so?

Todd: I was always a way bigger fan of Batman than Superman. The reason I say that is because Superman had unlimited powers. He could spin planets on his finger. There's very little jeopardy in the *Superman* book, whereas, technically, if Batman were thrown out of a window and didn't have his Batarang, he could hit the cement and die.

When I created Spawn, he had all these big giant fantastic powers, and if he wanted to use them, he could part seas.

SPAWN #1
ART RETROSPECTIVE



However, I didn't want to make it easy on him to do that.

The power meter was put in place to basically say, "You have one tank of gas, and when you're done using it, you go back to Hell." So if you had that knowledge, how slowly would you use the gas? In some cases you might not even use it, but instead, your own intelligence and skills, and not rely on your magic powers, even to the point of taking a physical beating. Yes, Spawn can be like Superman, if I need him to be, but I put an Achilles heel on him to have him act more like Batman.

Jen: Where are we at with Spawn's power meter today? It had major prominence from the inception of the title, but has dwindled in its appearance over the years.

Todd: The meter will be coming back, but will be different in some ways. At the beginning of *Spawn*, the power meter counted down as Spawn used his powers. If it hit zero, he was in trouble. Now, with the power meter's return, things will be turned on their heads. The opposite is happening in a lot of instances. The power meter is starting to count up.

Jen: We saw it start doing so in issue #185.

Todd: Right. We introduced it, it started low, and now it's going to start counting up. The question associated with it is still somewhat of the same. At the beginning it was, "What if it gets to zero?" Now, it's, "What if it gets to 9:9:9:9, plus one?" Now what happens? Does the nuclear bomb go off? How long until that happens?

Jen: Pin ups were really popular in books back in the day. What was the meaning of doing them and having other artists do them in your books?

Todd: At the end of the day I was just a comic geek, and it was cool to have artwork included from artists you liked. I was always a big George Perez fan, so it was great having him do a pinup in issue #1. He also did the cover to issue #101. Heck, I should have brought him back for #201!

Back to the question, it wasn't anything more than asking people to contribute cool art to a book, giving their version of your characters.

Jen: The look of the lettering for *Spawn* in the beginning was very specific. There was a lot of, as you like to say, "bounce" on the pages. Why did you envision it this way, and how did you work with Tom to get it to what we saw in issue #1? Where has it evolved to now?

Todd: Tom Orzechowski, who has been involved in more pages of *Spawn* than anyone else, including myself, was intentionally picked. I thought he was the best letterer in the industry, since there was so much variety in his books at the time.

At the beginning I would actually write on the artwork itself. I would indicate a lot of the bounce, and then Tom would take his skill and bring it to the next level. It was even things like, and it hasn't been one hundred percent accurate, but the intent was there, making all the balloons ovals of some shape. I didn't want them to be hand drawn, I wanted them to look like they had been done with stencils. I tried to keep captions from touching the top or side borders, so they were floating. Also, we gave a unique balloon to Spawn. There were many intentional decisions made all along the way. There are intentional decisions today, too, when I work on the lettering with Tom.

I think lettering is the most undervalued piece of the final art. I think the sum of a comic book is better than the parts, and the lettering is a big piece of that.

Jen: You have a knack for finding really creative ways to story tell with your layouts. Was there a reason you laid out issue #1 the way that you did?

Todd: Issue #1, artistically, was showing the fractured mind of this guy who made a pact, came back, was alive and dead—he was scrambled. The page layouts from the first issue were supposed to convey that. How does this confused man with limited knowledge start piecing his life back together, and what does it all mean as he moves forward?

Jen: When did you decide to move the ads to the back of the comic?

Todd: Pretty quickly. It became apparent to me that I wanted to have control over the page turns. There was only one way I was going to know what pages were going to be "turners", and that was to move all the ads out of the way. Odd pages were on the right, even pages on the left, so if I was ever going to do a big reveal, then we had to make sure it was an even number page.

Jen: I, personally, feel ads ruin the reading experience because you're interrupted when you don't necessarily want to be.

Do you have any additional thoughts on *Spawn* then to *Spawn* now? Obviously, we know the subject matter has matured, that you're mindset has changed since you initially introduced this character. The title has become more sophisticated, more noir, and much darker.

Todd: I think one of the reasons *Spawn* has survived for 20 years is because of its evolution. Early on, it was more of a classic superhero, comic book read. Now it's more urban and sophisticated. Even the look of it, the people and the shadows and all of that are by-products of it being around for 20 years. To me, it doesn't make sense to keep doing the same thing over and over. I've been involved in this book for 20 years and I don't want to keep doing what I've done before. I need to evolve for my own artistic wants and needs. I keep hoping that people will continue to go along for the ride.

20 YEARS OF SPAWN

1992
June: *Spawn* #1 released, selling 1.7 million copies.

July: *Spawn* #2 released. First appearance of Clown/Violator. First appearance of Jim Downing (cameo).

November: *Spawn* #6 released. First appearance of Overtkill.

1993
March: *Spawn* #9 released. First appearance of Cogliostro and Medieval Spawn.

December: *Spawn* #16 released. Greg Capullo takes over as regular series artist with the first issue in the three-part "Reflections" story arc. First appearance of Anti-Spawn (AKA Redeemer I).

1994
April: *Spawn/Batman* one-shot, written by Frank Miller and illustrated by Todd McFarlane is published by Image Comics.

May-July: Three-issue *Violator* mini-series, written by Alan Moore, released.

October: *Spawn* #25 released. First appearance of Tremor/ Richard Masullo. Illustrated by Image Comics co-founder, Marc Silvestri.

December: Todd Toys releases first series of Spawn action figures.

1995
May: *Spawn* #31 released. First appearance of Redeemer II.

June-September: *Spawn: Blood Feud* mini-series, written by Alan Moore, is released, as Spawn battles the the Curse.

July: *Spawn* #33 released. First appearance of The Freak (cameo).

1996
January: First issue of the four-part *Spawn/ WildC.A.T.S.* #1 crossover, written by Alan Moore, released.

June: *Spawn* #50 released.

August: *Spawn* #52 released, guest starring Erik Larsen's Savage Dragon.

September: *Curse of the Spawn* #1 released.

1997
May: The animated series, *Todd McFarlane's Spawn*, premieres on HBO.

July: *Spawn* movie soundtrack released, debuting at #7 on *Billboard's Top 200 U.S.* chart.

August: The live-action *Spawn* feature film is released.

1998
May: The second season of *Todd McFarlane's Spawn* premieres on HBO.

September: First volume of *Shadows of Spawn* manga released in Japan.

1999
March: *Spawn: The Dark Ages* #1 released.

May: The third season of *Todd McFarlane's Spawn* premieres on HBO.

June: *Spawn the Undead* #1 released.

July: *Cy-Gor* #1 released.

August: *Sam and Twitch* #1 released. Fan-favorite detectives star in their own title, written and illustrated by Brian Michael Bendis and Angel Medina. *Todd McFarlane's Spawn* wins "Outstanding Animated Program" Emmy.

September: *Spawn* #87 released. First appearance of Mammon.

2000
August: *HellSpawn* #1 released. Brian Michael Bendis and Ashley Wood introduce a new, darker, urban take on the Spawn mythos.

November: *Spawn* #100 released. Al Simmons defeats Malebolgia in Hell.

December: *Spawn* #101 released. Angel Medina takes over as regular series artist.

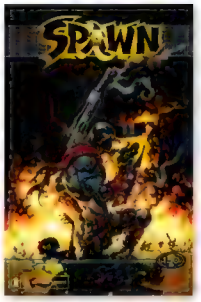
2001
March: *Sam and Twitch* #20 released. Todd McFarlane crafts "The John Doe Affair" with artists Alex Maleev and Paul Lee.

2002
March: *Spawn* #116 released First appearance of Redeemer III.

May: *Spawn* #117 released, celebrating the book's 10th Anniversary.

20 YEARS OF SPAWN

2003
June: *Case Files: Sam & Twitch* #1 released. An all-new crime series, giving detectives Sam Burke and Max "Twitch" Williams their second monthly comic book series.



2005
October: *Spawn* #150 released.

December: *Shadows of Spawn Vol. 1* released in U.S.

2007
January: The Spawn.com online comic, *The Adventures of Spawn* #1, is published for the first time.

February: *Spawn* #165 released, featuring the first comic book appearance and origin story of fan-favorite action figure, Mandarin Spawn.

May: *Spawn* #166 released. *Spawn: Godslayer* #1 released, re-imaging the Spawn mythos in an epic world of fantasy and magic.

2009
May: *Spawn: Origins Vol. 1* released, launching a new series of premium format trade paperback collections.

July: *Spawn: Architects of Fear*, illustrated by French artist Aleksi Briclot.

2011
January: *Spawn* #200 released, illustrated by Michael Golden and Todd McFarlane. *Spawn* #201 released. Szymon Kudranski takes over as regular series artist. First Appearance of Bludd.

May: *Spawn* #207 released, beginning four-part "Q&A" story arc. The demonic, Hel, from the pages of *HellSpawn*, makes her first appearance in the core *Spawn* title.

November: *Spawn* #213 released, beginning six-part "The Gathering Storm" story arc.

December: *Spawn* #214 is released, marking the fifteenth issue released in 2011.

2004
May: *Spawn: Simony*, illustrated by French artist Aleksi Briclot, is released.

2006
October: *Spawn* #161 released, beginning the "Armageddon" story arc.

2008
October: *Spawn* #185 released. "End Game" story arc begins – death of Al Simmons, Jim Downing becomes the world's newest HellSpawn. Image Comics co-founder Whilce Portacio begins run as new series artist.

December: *Spawn: Book of the Dead* released.

2010
March: *Spawn* #196 released, illustrated by Image Comics co-founder, Rob Liefeld.

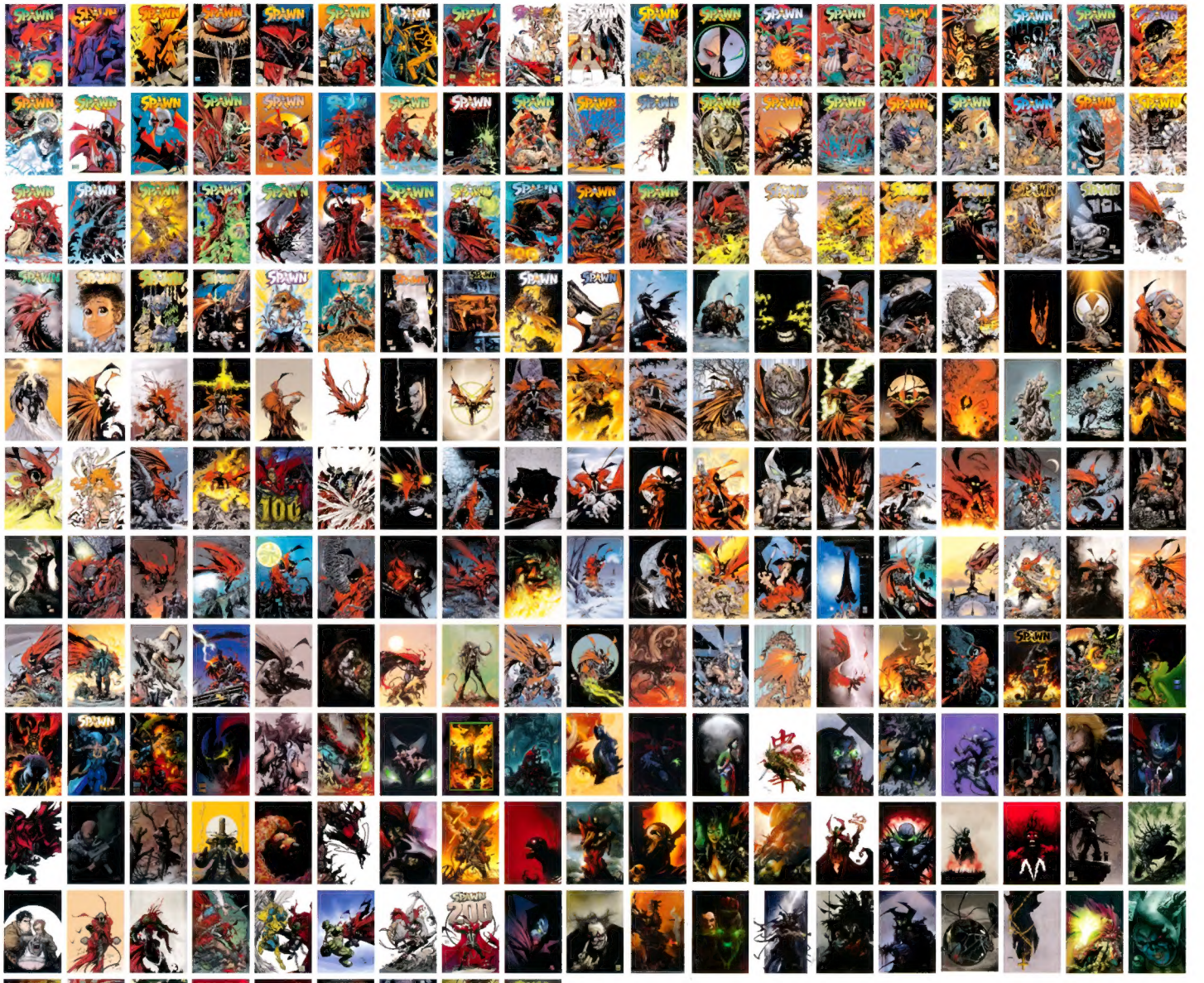
May: *Sam and Twitch: The Writer* #1 (of 4) released.

August: *Spawn* #198 released. First appearance of Patient 46.

September: *Spawn* #199 released, illustrated by Image Comics co-founder, Erik Larsen.

2012
May: *Spawn* #219 released, featuring the conclusion of the epic Spawn vs. Malebolgia showdown.

June: 20th Anniversary of *Spawn*. Issue #220 released, commemorating two decades of the long-running independent title.



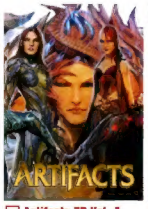
20 YEARS, 220 ISSUES ... AND COUNTING.

ANNIVERSARY
20
SPAWN

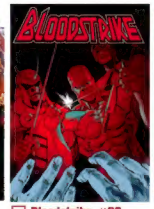
☐ The Activity TP Vol. 1

☐ America's Got Powers #3

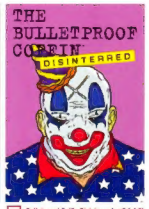
☐ Artifacts #19



☐ Artifacts TP Vol. 4



☐ Bloodstrike #29



☐ Bulletproof Coffin Disinterred #8 (of 8)

☐ Chew #27

☐ Creator Owned Heroes #1

☐ Dancer #2

☐ Danger Club #3

☐ Darkness #104

☐ Epic Kill #2

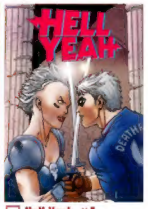
☐ Fatale #6

☐ Fatale TP Vol. 1 Death Chases Me

☐ Glory #27

☐ Grim Leaper #2 (of 4)

☐ Hack Slash #17



☐ Hell Yeah #4

☐ Liberty Meadows Sunday Collection HC Book 1

☐ Manhattan Projects #4

☐ Mind The Gap #2

☐ Morning Glories TP Vol. 3 P.E.

☐ Near Death #9

☐ No Place Like Home #5

☐ Peter Panzerfaust #5

☐ Prophet #26

☐ Saga #4

☐ Savage Dragon Invasion TP

☐ Secret #3

☐ Skullkickers #15

☐ Supreme #65

☐ Thief of Thieves #5

☐ The Walking Dead #99

☐ The Walking Dead TP Vol. 16 A Larger World

☐ Witchblade #157

☐ Youngblood #72

Question of the Month

"What comic changed your perspective of the medium?"

"Saving Time. Specifically, Alan Moore's run. As a kid, I loved the Swamp Thing movie, and managed to convince my Mom to buy me the trade. I didn't realize just how different it was, both from the movie and from the comics I'd read. So, basically, finding a whole bunch of Alan Moore's material was my head as a 10-year-kid really changed what I thought comics were and what they could be. It may also have resulted in this beard."
Justin Jordan
THE STRANGE TALENT OF LUTHER STRODE

"I totally skipped all my assigned recommended 'Understanding Comics' by Scott McCloud, and that got me very gun ho about the potential of comics. After reading 'Understanding Comics' I discovered a ton of work and I think my biggest hero was Scott Morse because of his pacing and storytelling. Fred Pope's 'Escape' was a big eye opener. I loved the stories where the artist added comics. I really loved the giant size of the book and the storytelling. It was visually full of energy and expression."
Mark Andrew Smith
CLAUSTROPHOBIA'S SCHOOL FOR WORLD CONQUERORS

"Krazy by Basaluk. It was middle school, after I had ever read. You can tell it's the work of a single creator just doing what he wants without reservation. The world created in these short stories is so lush and surreal. And the story-telling is so well done! It's really unique the way he arranged the panels on the page. Krazy is also a good example of the power of silent/wordless storytelling in comics. It really inspired me to explore more in my own work."
Ron Garney
PLANETOID

"For me, it was HEAVY METAL magazine. Off those I have been reading weekly comics off the newsstand and when I got the first issue to my hand I was introduced to an adult world of genre storytelling by some of the greatest talents from Europe. It's probably when I first fell in love with the work of moebius as well. The idea that comics could be so out there really opened up my thinking and inspired me in so many ways."
Tommy Lee Edwards
BRAIN CHAR

"I discovered The Dark Knight Returns (#1) at just the right age. Everything about it — like writing, the art, the format — told me comics weren't like saint anymore."
Ron Marz
SPAWN

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Steve Niles is the creator of the groundbreaking vampire comic series 30 Days of Night, as well as Criminal Macabre and Aleister Arcane. He is currently writing two upcoming Image Comics comics, Crime and Terror, drawn by Scott Morse, and Chin Music, drawn by Tony Harris. He lives in Los Angeles with his girlfriend Monica, two dogs, four cats, and Gil the tortoise.

What are you working on right now?
A stroke, I think. Actually today I'm working on Chin Music and Nosferatu Wars, two of my newest creator-owned books.

What's the best part of your job?
The freedom I have to write and create what I want. In comics these days being able to work without company mandates or having to check in with 11 other writers to finish a script is huge. I check myself often when I start to get stressed. Sure, it can get hard, but at the end of the day I get to write about vampires and robots. I'm very lucky.

What's the worst part of your job?
Getting paid. I finance a lot of the books I do, or work free for backend, so I do a lot of nail biting around the end of the month. As I create more and more projects I own and control, it's getting easier. The more I deal direct with fans/retailers the better.

What's the weirdest part of your job?
The recognition modern creators receive. I grew up not even knowing what most creators looked like. These days our faces are very public. And of course the only time I get recognized is when I'm at Home Depot in my sweats, ripped tee and bed-head.

How did you first discover comics?
I was a maybe 4 years old when I started. In the late 60's, and 70's you could walk down the street without tripping over a place selling comics. They were everywhere. My earliest memory of reading a comic was being in church, so small my feet didn't go over the seat, and I had a Creepy Magazine in my lap. I remember because my Mom was very upset about the cover and the fact that I was reading it in church.

If you weren't working in comics, what would you be doing?
I'm sure I'd be doing something in publishing, writing or playing music. I've spent my life making things. I don't really know any other way except working retail or being a short order chef – my previous jobs.

What's the best thing a fan has ever said to you?
"Your stuff got me back into comics." I hear that every so often and it really does make me feel good.

Who is the biggest influence on your work?
Richard Matheson for overall writing and Alan Moore for comics. Forget all the noise around Moore. He's a rock-solid writer. Bernie Wrightson made me want to do comics though.

Own up to one of your guilty pleasures.
I recently watched an Andy Griffith marathon...from my own collection. I have a weakness for some really silly old sitcoms.

What is the single work of which you're most proud?
That's really hard. I was very proud of Mystery Society before it got the axe. I suppose my work with Cal McDonald because I've been at it so long and now there are dozens of comics, novels and maybe a movie. I never get tired of writing him. But really, Freaks of the Heartland is my fave because Greg Ruth made it ten times more beautiful then I ever imagined.

What was the last comic book you bought?
Heart by Blair Butler and Kevin Mellon.

If you could be someone else for a day, who would it be?
That's easy. Rick Remender. I want to know what it feels like to walk around with such a sumptuous body.

Pick three things you couldn't live without.
My partner Monica Richards, my amazing friends... and my book collection (that includes comics).

What's the strangest thing you have in your house?
A giant African tortoise.

What is one of your favorite places?
Vasquez Rocks. Because I like pretending I'm hunting Gorn.

What music are you listening to these days?
Lots of old punk stuff and a lot of soundtracks. Wake up to Bad Brains, work to Russian Circles and Clint Mansell.

What is your favorite film of all time?
This week it's John Carpenter's *the THING*. It's just about the perfect horror film.

Who is your best friend?
Bernie Wrightson.

What is the worst advice you've ever received?
"Move to LA. The people are so nice."

When was the last time you were truly frightened?
I dunno. When was the last GOP debate?

Name someone you really admire and explain why.
I admire Mike Mignola a lot and I really look up to him. Aside from being an amazing natural talent he is the creators, creator. He does what he wants, never compromises his vision and produces great book after great book. He also has an amazing family. I want to be Mike when I grow up.

What would you like to see happen in comics in the next 12 months?
I'd like to see moves to expand the market and I think creator-owned is the key. The leotard boys have had a 70-year shot and they've done all they can. It is abundantly clear that, aside from the summer films, the general public doesn't care about reading superhero comics so it is up to creators doing indies to get out there and show the world what ELSE can be done with words and pictures.

What the world needs now is...
Love, love, love and new comics.

SPAWN #220

TODD McFARLANE RETURNS TO SPAWN AS WRITER AND COVER ARTIST! Celebrate SPAWN's 20th Anniversary with this special landmark release. Jim Downing has long been a man lost – confused by his missing past, hounded at every turn and manipulated by forces beyond his control. No longer. With his past finally coming into focus and a full understanding of the man he once was just out of reach, Jim embraces the hell might of his horrific hell-born powers to piece together a mystery that has ties to the very core of the Spawn universe.

PLANETOID #1

Silas, an ex-soldier turned space pirate, finds himself stranded on a mysterious planet in alien territory. As he explores the long abandoned industrial ruins of the planet's surface he will have to fend off rogue mechanical creatures, roving cyborg militias, and a hostile alien military with a bounty on his head. Silas will have to rely on resourcefulness and hare-brained survival tactics in order to stay alive and ultimately unlock the secrets of a planet where survival is a luxury and escape an impossibility.

CARBON GREY VOL. 2 #1

"DAUGHTERS OF STONE" Months have passed since the events of volume one. By order of the Queen an expedition force sets out in search of the real stone of Gottfaust. Anna hunts down the conspirators behind an assassination attempt on Her Majesty. What has become of the sisters in exile, Eva and Giselle?

THE RED/RE[A]D DIARY FLIPBOOK HC

KRISTIANSEN's European Album is newly translated to English by TERRY KRISTIANSEN and STEVEN SEAGLE. But in a unique flip-navel fashion, the book is also "re-mixed" with a completely different script devised by SEAGLE before he collaborated on the translation. Both versions – THE RED DIARY – a tale of art forgery and World War and THE READ DIARY – a tale of identity theft and lost love – comprise this unique graphic novel from SEAGLE and KRISTIANSEN – the Eisner-nominated/winning team behind the acclaimed Vertigo graphic novel It's a bird...

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